

### EFFECT OF PNEUMATIC HAMMERS ON HEALTH.

In accordance with its plan of eliminating as far as possible preventable diseases among workers in various industries, the United States Public Health Service of the Treasury Department has begun an investigation of the effect on the health of workers of pneumatic hammers as used in cutting limestone.

It has been learned that inconvenience is felt by workers in this industry in using the air hammers in soft stone because of a temporary numbness of the fingers whenever the hand becomes chilled. No serious consequences resulted from this disorder but it appeared well to find the reason of the condition and to see if it could not be remedied.

The most important cause was found to be the higher vibration rate of the hammers when used in soft stone, and the second cause the tight and strained grasp which the workers had to use. Cold weather brought out the symptoms, but was not in itself a cause of the condition.

By using a shank of larger diameter, which would permit a more comfortable grasp by the worker, it is believed that a good deal of the strain on the muscles would be relieved. If the shank were enlarged by using a tight-fitting covering of asbestos or some similar substance, the cold would not be intensified as at present by the metal, and the handle would act as a shock absorber.

## Book Reviews

**A Practical Text-Book of Infection, Immunity and Specific Therapy** with special reference to immunologic technic. By John A. Kolmer, M. D., Dr. P. H., M. Sc., Assistant Professor of Experimental Pathology, University of Pennsylvania, with an introduction by Allen J. Smith, M. D., Professor of Pathology, University of Pennsylvania. Second Edition Thoroughly Revised. Octavo of 978 pages with 147 original illustrations, 46 in colors. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company, 1917. Cloth, \$7.00 net; Half Morocco, \$8.50.

In the second edition of Kolmer's book all the newer tests used in a modern immunological laboratory of the hospital or clinic and at the bedside are again minutely described in simple and lucid style. The treatise is of interest not only to the student or laboratory specialist, but it should also be consulted by the practitioner, because Kolmer makes easily accessible the main principles and the proper interpretation underlying the numerous tests on which he relies in his prognosis and in his therapeutic measures.

Among the many additions and alterations, particular attention has been paid to the Schick test for immunity in diphtheria, active immunization in diphtheria with toxin-antitoxin mixtures; complement fixation in tuberculosis and other bacterial infections, the standardization of a quantitative Wassermann reaction; tests to be used before transfusion for iso-haemo-agglutinins and iso-hemolysins and the Lange's colloidal gold test.

In the chapter on treatment of various infections, the importance of the nonspecific "shock" therapy is discussed, and the use of serum of convalescents and normal persons in acute poliomyelitis is fully considered. The field of chemotherapy is well covered, and the section on bacterial chemotherapy is a noteworthy summary in the light of our recent knowledge of antiseptics in the treatment of war wounds.

In the chapter on anaphylaxis, one misses the recent studies of Novv and DeKruif on anaphylatoxin, and again the discussion on allergic skin reactions gives the reader the impression that cutaneous hypersensitiveness is a function of anaphylaxis. Recent as well as old experiments have clearly shown that conditions which will sensitize an animal do not necessarily sensitize its skin. To bring

about cutaneous hypersensitiveness, a focus of infection has to be produced. On the other hand, Kolmer clearly states that a positive skin test is evidence of infection or sensitization to a particular protein, probably without having any direct relation to resistance to infection or re-infection.

Aside from a few mis-spelled names of authors, the text is free from mistakes.

K. F. M.

**Thyroid and Thymus.** By André Crotti, M. D., F. A. C. S., LL. D. Published by Lea and Febiger, 1918. Price, \$10.00.

This monograph, representing seventeen years' work, is undoubtedly the most complete and best treatise on the thyroid and thymus that we have in the English language. The author has been trained along both pathological and surgical lines—that his training has been good is manifested by the character of his work. As a pupil of Kocher, he inclines largely towards his views regarding the classification, pathology and treatment of goiter, yet he is thoroughly familiar with the extensive literature on this subject. He has very systematically considered the anatomy, physiology, pathology, symptoms, and medical and surgical treatment of the various diseases of the thyroid gland and, to a lesser extent, the thymus. In harmony with the views of McCarrison, who has recently published a book on thyroid diseases, he considers Graves' disease a form of toxic thyroiditis. He has, however, overlooked what seems to the reviewer a very important contribution to the study of hyperthyroidism. We refer to Goetsch's work on toxic adenomata of the thyroid—that the adenomata are more often responsible for the toxic symptoms, than are the remnants of thyroid tissue. This point has also been brought out in some of the publications of the Mayo Clinic. When, for instance, in a case of marked hyperthyroidism, without the symptoms of exophthalmos, we find a goiter consisting almost entirely of adenomata, with only a thin covering of fibrous thyroid tissue, it seems illogical to consider minute areas of hyperplasia in the thyroid as the cause of the symptoms. We are inclined to think that Wilson, who originated the theory, must have abandoned it.

The book is exceptionally well illustrated by original illustrations, many of them being in color. It is very readable throughout and though over 500 pages in length, there is no padding, nor any attempt to magnify the ego. It certainly ranks high among the monographs and will remain authoritative for a considerable number of years.

W. I. T.

**A Text-Book of the Practice of Medicine.** By James M. Anders, M. D., Ph. D., LL. D., Professor of Medicines and Clinical Medicine, Medico-Chirurgical College Graduate School, University of Pennsylvania. Thirteenth edition thoroughly revised with the assistance of John H. Musser, Jr., M. D., Associate in Medicine, University of Pennsylvania. Octavo of 1259 pages, fully illustrated. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company, 1917. Cloth, \$6.00 net; Half Morocco, \$7.50 net.

Perhaps no better single volume on the practice of medicine can be had than this standard work which has been admirably brought up to date by the addition of such matter as the following: Treatment of tetanus, acidosis in diabetes, chylothorax, etiology of aortic incompetency, treatment of asthma, diverticulitis, functional tests of hepatic insufficiency, Gaucher's disease, estimation of renal function, anaphylaxis of food intoxication, pneumococcic infections, focal sepsis, ratbite fever, febris wolhynica and pyorrhea alveolaris. Also, a number of old subjects have been re-written, particularly the chapter on the nervous system by Dr. Chas. Potts. Too much can hardly be said in praise of this excellent work.

H. F. A.